

Remarks

The Claims:

Claims 1-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0191349 to Hsu et al. (Hsu).

Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitation of “forming an inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region having a first side that is substantially parallel to said surface and a second side that is not parallel to said surface and not perpendicular to said surface; and forming a second soft magnetic pole layer over said inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region, such that said second pole layer has an interface that is substantially equidistant from said second side.”

Hsu does not have such a limitation, and so claim 1 is not anticipated by Hsu et al.

Claim 2 includes the limitation that “forming said inorganic nonferromagnetic apex includes etching said hardbaked photoresist mask and said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer to create said inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region.”

Hsu, in contrast, states in paragraph 58 that “alumina layer 210” is “planarized,” and does not teach etching the “alumina layer 210.”

Claim 3 includes the limitation of “forming a photoresist mask over said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer, said mask terminating adjacent to a desired location of said second side.”

Hsu, in contrast, shows in FIG. 10A that “alumina layer 210” is formed on “hardbaked photoresist 208.”

Claim 4 includes the limitation of “chemically etching said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer.”

Hsu, in contrast, states in paragraph 58 that “alumina layer 210” is “planarized,” and does not teach etching the “alumina layer 210.”

Claim 8 includes the limitation of “forming a photoresist mask atop said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer.” Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action assertion that Hsu teaches this limitation. Instead, Hsu shows in FIG. 10A that “alumina layer 210” is formed on “hardbaked photoresist 208.”

Claim 8 also includes the limitation of “etching said hardbaked photoresist mask and said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer.” Applicants respectfully disagree with the

Office Action assertion that Hsu teaches this limitation. Instead, Hsu states in paragraph 58 that "alumina layer 210" is "planarized," and does not teach etching the "alumina layer 210."

Claim 8 also includes the limitation of "removing said hardbaked photoresist mask." Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action assertion that Hsu teaches this limitation.

Claim 15 has been amended to include the limitation of "a step for forming a second soft magnetic pole layer over said inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region, such that said second pole layer has a region that is substantially parallel to said sloping surface and disposed within one micron of said sloping surface."

Applicants respectfully assert that Hsu does not teach this limitation.

Claim 16 includes the limitation of "forming a hardbaked photoresist mask over said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer." Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action assertion that Hsu teaches forming a hardbaked photoresist mask 208 over the inorganic nonferromagnetic layer (210)."

Claim 16 also includes the limitation of "etching said hardbaked photoresist mask and said inorganic nonferromagnetic layer to create said inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region." Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action assertion that Hsu teaches "chemically etching the hardbaked photoresist mask and the inorganic nonferromagnetic apex region."

Conclusion:

Applicants have responded to each of the items in the Office Action. Applicants believe that the claims are in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Box No Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on April 9, 2003.

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